



Biography: LTC Thomas J. Closs

A Partnership for Safe Chemical Weapons Destruction

Commander Blue Grass Chemical Activity

Lieutenant Colonel Closs completed an Army ROTC scholarship program and graduated from Ohio University in 1987 with a Bachelor's degree in Political Science. After commissioning, he completed the Chemical Officer Basic Course. His first assignment was in Germany with the 2nd Armored Division (Forward). There, he served as the Battalion Chemical Officer for 4-3 Field Artillery, a nuclear-capable self-propelled artillery battalion, and deployed for Operation DESERT SHIELD/STORM in 1991.



Upon redeployment, he was the Decontamination Platoon Leader, Headquarters Company Executive Officer, and later Headquarters Company Commander for the 498th Combat Support Battalion.

In 1992, LTC Closs served briefly as the Assistant Operations Officer for the 84th Chemical Battalion and then completed the Chemical Officer Advanced Course in Fort McClellan, Alabama. His next assignment was at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, with the 82d Airborne Division. From 1993 to 1995, he served as both the Brigade Chemical Officer and as the S-3 Air Operations Officer for the 82d Aviation Brigade. From 1995 through 1997, he commanded the 21st Chemical Company (Airborne), leading them to be recognized as the winner of the MG William L. Sibert Award as the best Chemical Company in the U.S. Army.

LTC Closs was next assigned to the Washington, DC area. He first served at Headquarters, Army Materiel Command (AMC) as a Chemical Surety Officer and later as Executive Officer to the Deputy Chief of Staff for Chemical and Biological Matters. He then served 16 months at Headquarters, Department of the Army (HQDA) in the Pentagon as the Army and joint Systems Integrator for Individual and Collective Protection Systems and as Executive Officer for the HQDA Chemical Division.

In 2001, LTC Closs completed the Command and General Staff College at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas where he also completed a Master's degree in Military Arts and Sciences. Upon graduation he was posted back to the 82d Airborne Division, this time as the Deputy Division Chemical Officer. In 2002, he was selected as the Division's Secretary of the General Staff. He then deployed to Afghanistan for Operation ENDURING FREEDOM. The following year, he became the Battalion Executive Officer for the 82d Forward Support Battalion where he deployed for Operation IRAQI FREEDOM, including eight months in Fallujah, Iraq. Upon redeployment, he was selected as the Chemical Officer for Headquarters, U.S. European

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Command in Stuttgart, Germany, where he had worked since 2004. He assumed command of the Blue Grass Chemical Activity, Richmond, Kentucky, on 12 July 2006.

LTC Closs' awards and decorations include the Bronze Star Medal with oak leaf cluster, the Defense Meritorious Service Medal, the Meritorious Service Medal with two oak leaf clusters, the Army Commendation Medal with three oak leaf clusters, the Army Achievement Medal with oak leaf cluster, the Humanitarian Service Medal, the Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal, the Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, the Overseas Service Ribbon with oak leaf cluster, the Afghanistan Campaign Medal, the Iraq Campaign Medal, the SWA Service Medal, and the Kuwait Liberation Medal. He has also been awarded the Ranger Tab, the Master Parachutist Badge, the British Parachutist Badge, and the Army Staff Identification Badge.